

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNORS OF BAJA CALIFORNIA,
EUGENIO ELORDUY AND CALIFORNIA,
ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

Mexicali, Baja California, September 23, 2005

The region of Baja California-California is one of the most important and dynamic in both, Mexico and the United States of America, particularly in regards to its social ties and economic activities which develops a close relationship and foster development on both sides of the border.

For that reason, today the border states of Baja California and California have come together to work on a number of key issues and have laid the groundwork for continued productive cooperation. We cannot underestimate the importance of our states working together in order to find regional solutions to the challenges we face.

The citizens of our states have important familial, economic and cultural ties that cannot be ignored. When we work together to produce positive results the citizens on both side of the border reap the benefits.

Economic prosperity and security in the region depends on a close coordination between our states. Government, the private sector and citizen-based groups all have a role to play. As leaders of our respective states our hope is to serve as facilitators of an exchange that takes place at various levels of society.

It is our firm commitment to maintain an open dialogue and to promote initiatives that will encourage mutual understanding and create economic opportunities for both Baja California and California.

Illegal immigration is perhaps one of the most challenging and controversial issues that we face, but that does not mean that workable solutions cannot be found. Our dialogue with respect to this issue must be constructive and based on mutual respect. As the leaders of our states we announce our firm commitment to upholding the law and to protecting human rights.

Drug traffic and the violence that it generates is another important challenge hurting our societies. In both states we are working hard to attack this problem, but the achievements are by no means enough. We have agreed to look for new and stronger solutions that we can present to our federal governments, so that federal and local authorities on both sides of the border can put in place more efficient programs in our fight against drug traffic and drug consumption.

With respect to the proposed plan known as the All American Canal we have agreed to a thorough review, with the participation of the *Consejo de Desarrollo Economico* from Mexicali, on the implications for both California and northern Mexico.

As part of the work by members of our cabinets, the following specific issues were taken up during this day:

- a. Border crossings and economic development
- b. Tourism
- c. Educational and sports exchanges
- d. Environmental quality improvement
- e. Border security
- f. Emergency response

The most important objective of holding state-to-state summits is to advance along the path outlined for each issue and to produce concrete results. In order to ensure progress, these summits will henceforth take place regularly, to guarantee a permanent working relationship between our Administrations.

It is with pride and optimism that we look toward the future of our region. We are confident that through continued cooperation creative solutions can be found for those issues where there is disagreement, and opportunities for economic growth maximized.

Eugenio Elorduy Walther
Governor of Baja California

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